



For Carl and Julie Dubovy, their 18th consecutive visit to Aruba is a dream come true

Though they may have not hit the official twenty-year mark yet, Aruba has no more enthusiastic Ambassadors of Goodwill than Carl and Julie Dubovy of Chester, New Jersey, originally from Czechoslovakia. Their life story reads like a novel, suffering under the communist regime of a Russian satellite country, but a prosperous life in the United States has allowed them to enjoy the place they consider to be “Paradise on Earth” every year since they first came to Aruba in 1988.

This year is particularly poignant for Julie, as during their five-week stay she will share this time with her sister Helen Kovacikova, who made the journey all the way from what is now Slovakia since 1998, an odyssey that has allowed her to be with Julie on her birthday for the first time in thirty-five years. “This is something I have hoped and wished for deep in my heart for longer than I can say,” confesses Julie” to have my sister with me on my birthday, which I always celebrate in Aruba with all the wonderful friends I have made here. This is the greatest gift, the greatest joy I can have for my birthday.”

Indeed, though it took some convincing to get Helen to make that twenty-five hour journey all alone to arrive on Aruba’s shores, she does not regret it for a moment. “One sees photos and films, and reads about the island, but it does not prepare you for how very beautiful it really is, it is beyond anything I imagined,” translates Julie. “The sand is like silk, no where in Europe do you see such sand on the beaches. The color of the water and the beautiful views are so much more than anything I expected.”

For long-time visitors Carl and Julie, their five weeks at the Marriott Ocean Club is something they have to look forward to every year. They love their life in the U.S. with their two children, Diane and Mark, who have enjoyed Aruba with them many times over the years, but their annual trip to the island is their escape to another world, a perfect world, a reward they deserve after a life of some hardship.

Carl and Julie are both children of Holocaust survivors, Carl, a survivor himself, having immigrated to the states in 1948 when he was a teenager. Julie’s mother, who was Jewish, was hidden from the Nazis by her father during the war, and they eventually married. Julie and Helen grew up in Czechoslovakia, under the yoke of the KGB and the harsh communist rule. Carl eventually prospered, and become an Allergist, obtaining his medical degree from Queens University in Belfast Ireland. When traveling back to the “old country” with his mother, he met Julie, and in two days was very taken with her. Upon returning to the states, they began a correspondence that lasted six months, during which he asked her to marry him. When they were married in Czechoslovakia, Julie’s father was demoted at his work, because his daughter married “an American.” Throughout their married life, Julie’s parents could never visit her in the U.S. as a couple, as one of her parents had to stay in Czechoslovakia to guarantee the return of the other.

Now, under Perestroika, her sister is finally free to join her in the place they have enjoyed above all others for the past eighteen years, Aruba. “The island is beautiful, and we have seen it grow and change over the years, the food has improved enormously, and the number of restaurants have increased in diversity and quality,” asserts both Julie and Carl. “Fortunately, what has not changed, and what brings us back every year is the people. The wonderful, sincere warmth of the native islanders is exceptional, and we have traveled everywhere. They really do make you feel as if this is your home away from home.” Carl adds, “Not that I do this, but I have noticed that even if you don’t give them a tip, they still smile warmly at you.” Julie celebrated her birthday with Carl and Helen at Sole Mare restaurant on February 7th, and the Marriott Ocean Club management presented her with a bottle of wine. Upon their return from the restaurant, they brought with them the cake, which was much too much for two ladies watching their figures to consume, so they gave it to the bellhops at the resort. A few hours later, the bellhops presented Julie with a bottle of wine and a birthday card signed by all of them. “These are the little things that make our annual visit such a delight,” reports Julie, “this is what we remember and why we come back every year and urge people to come to Aruba. It is not only the sun, sand and sea, and the wonderful restaurants; it is the kindness of the people and their open hearts that have convinced us to buy additional weeks of timesharing over the years.” Helen will stay with Julie and Carl for a full month before making the long journey back to Slovakia, and the two sisters are making the most of every minute together. Julie enjoys introducing Helen to their “extended Aruban family” of the beach, like Ralph, from Old Tappan, New Jersey, and the many other friends they have made amongst their fellow timeshare owners over the years. Julie and Carl have many wonderful memories of their times in Aruba, but this year’s visit is very special to them above all others. The News offers Julie a warm *Pabien* on your birthday, and the wish that you are able to share it with your sister Helen every year from now on.